

[By Rachel Leven](#)

More than 30 Democrats called on President Obama to recess-appoint five Federal Election Commission (FEC) commissioners during the Easter recess next week.

Chief deputy whip Peter Welch (D-Vt.) asked the president to "use his constitutional authority" to replace the commissioners. These commissioners' terms have expired and the commission's deadlock is holding back further clarifications on significant issues coming out of the Citizens United v. FEC Supreme Court ruling.

"Doing so [appointing new commissioners] will breathe life into this important agency and send a clear signal to those seeking to exploit an uncertain campaign landscape that the cop is back on the beat and that federal election laws will be fully enforced," Welch's letter, signed by several Democrats, states.

Watchdogs have also been calling for recess appointments to stunt the impact of the landmark Supreme Court ruling. The ruling allowed unlimited money into elections, as long as it's not coordinated with or donated to specific candidates or parties.

Ten watchdogs, including Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) and Democracy 21, put together a petition on the matter in January. The petition, which received more than 25,000 signatures in February, still has not received a response from Obama.

The president has made one set of recess appointments this year — he appointed three individuals to the National Labor Relations Board, and Richard Cordray to head the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and others have already challenged the January act that put Obama at odds with Republicans.

The group of Democrats also sent a letter to the IRS to investigate 501(c)(4) groups affiliated with super-PACs. Watchdogs have called on the IRS to do the same; however, many of these letters and efforts have been rebutted by Republicans as partisan attacks.

Other members who signed these letters include Reps. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa), Joe Courtney (D-Conn.), Ted Deutch (D-Fla.), Lloyd Doggett (D-Texas), Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.), Sam Farr (D-Calif.), Luis Gutierrez (D-Ill.), Nydia Velázquez (D-N.Y.), Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.), Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), Michael Capuano (D-Mass.), Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.), John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.), Donna Edwards (D-Md.), Keith Ellison (D-Minn.), Bob Filner (D-Calif.), George Miller (D-Calif.), Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.), Alcee Hastings (D-Fla.), Maurice Hinchey (D-N.Y.), Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-Ill.), Hank Johnson (D-Ga.), John Olver (D-Mass.), Jared Polis (D-Colo.), Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), John Sarbanes (D-Md.), Jan Shakowsky (D-Ill.), Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), John Yarmuth (D-Ky.) and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.).